



COT Security Alert – Scam Phone Calls

A phone scam has been reported recently in our environment where the caller claims to be from Microsoft and is calling about problems or security issues purported to be on the victims' computer. These scammers may ask for the victim by name and may actually work through PC issues with them, but will eventually ask for personal information, including password or credit card information. They may impress on the victim that the matter is urgent or use some other kind of pressure to take the victim off guard. They then misuse the information obtained in any or all of several ways, including charging the credit card for the "service" call, stealing money from accounts and other forms of identity fraud. The caller may give a return phone number if asked, but the number is not legitimate.

It should be noted scammers of this type can use any fake identity that could help them obtain personal information and that IT companies such as Microsoft do not initiate direct contact with consumers in this way.

Anyone receiving calls to repair their PC or for any other type of service are advised to:

- Be wary of unsolicited calls, even if they claim to represent a respected company.
- Never provide personal information, such as password, social security numbers, credit card information or bank details, to an unsolicited caller.
- Do not go to a website, make any changes to your computer, use a provided phone number to call back or follow any other instruction from unsolicited callers.
- Ensure you have the latest security updates for all programs running on your PC.
- Always use strong, unique passwords and change them regularly.
- Always rely on your own IT staff in making changes to your PC.
- Report a call like this to your supervisor.

If you believe you have fallen victim to one of these calls, change your password immediately and call your IT department.

This email should be distributed to end users to make them aware of these phone scammers who may call any phone number, whether private or state-owned.

Notice: COT is providing this information so that you are aware of the latest security threats, vulnerabilities, software patches, etc. You should consult with your network administrator or other technical resources to ensure that the appropriate actions for these alerts are followed. If you are a network administrator and need additional information, please call the Help Desk at 502.564.7576.

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